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Baker-Polito Administration Names Appointees to Three Opioid Special Commissions

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced appointees to three special commissions created under the landmark opioid legislation signed into law earlier this year. Two commissions, *a Special Commission to Study the Incorporation of Safe and Effective Pain Treatment and Prescribing Practices into the Professional Training of Students that may Prescribe Controlled Substances* and *a Special Commission to Examine the Feasibility of Establishing a Pain Management Access Program*, are comprised of public and private industry experts from across the Commonwealth, including six appointments each from the Governor. Marylou Sudders, Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, also announced four recent appointees to the *Special Commission to Investigate and Study State Licensed Addiction Treatment Centers*.

“Earlier this year, I was honored to sign landmark legislation including the first law in the nation to limit first time adult opioid prescriptions to a seven-day supply, and other important prevention and education provisions recommended by our opioid working group,” said **Governor Charlie Baker**. “I look forward to reviewing the recommendations produced by these commissions over the next several months and working with the Legislature, the healthcare community, our medical schools, and all other stakeholders to evaluate how they may help in our fight against the opioid epidemic.”

“Today’s appointments represent a diverse group of some of the top industry professionals the Commonwealth has to offer,” said **Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “These Special Commissions will significantly contribute to our goal of equipping the Commonwealth’s

physicians with the necessary tools to take a holistic approach when treating their patients.”

The *Special Commission to Study the Incorporation of Safe and Effective Pain Treatment and Prescribing Practices into the Professional Training of Students that may Prescribe Controlled Substances* will submit recommendations on or before December 1, 2016. The Special Commission is tasked with developing recommendations to ensure future prescribers have an understanding of certain fundamental issues relative to the opioid epidemic, including: pain treatment, pain treatment planning, safe prescribing practices and prescription monitoring. Per the legislation, the Governor will appoint Myecia Minter-Jordan as Chair of the Special Commission. [Click here for Section 58, Chapter 52 of the Acts of 2016, establishing the Special Commission.](#)

The *Special Commission to Examine the Feasibility of Establishing a Pain Management Access Program* will file an initial report on or before November 1, 2016 and then a final report on or before November 1, 2017. The Special Commission will analyze the potential usefulness of the Commonwealth establishing a pain management program in order to increase access to pain management services. This Special Commission will be co-chaired by Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders and UMass Medical School Chancellor Michael Collins. [Click here for Section 59, Chapter 52 of the Acts of 2016, establishing the Special Commission.](#)

“These commissions are essential to finding new and innovative prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery strategies and to ensuring that individuals who need medication for pain management have access to safe and effective treatment options,” said **Secretary Sudders**. “These Commissions will further the administration’s commitment to tackling the opioid epidemic in the Commonwealth.”

Secretary Sudders recently appointed four members to the *Special Commission to Investigate and Study State Licensed Addiction Treatment Centers*: Marcia B. Julian, Esq., John “Jack” P. Reilly, Doris E. Kraemer and Emily F. Stewart. This Special Commission is tasked with studying the effectiveness of state licensed addiction treatment centers. The commission will submit recommendations in January 2017.

[In November, 2015 the Baker-Polito Administration](#), in partnership with the deans of the Commonwealth’s four medical schools and the Massachusetts Medical Society released a pioneering set of medical education core competencies for the prevention and management of prescription drug misuse. The set of cross-institutional core competencies is aimed at ensuring all medical students across the Commonwealth are trained in primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies regarding prescription drug misuse. In [February, 2016 the Baker-Polito Administration also announced](#), in partnership with the deans of the Commonwealth’s three dental schools and the Massachusetts Dental Society, a first-in-the-nation set of dental education core competencies for the prevention and management of prescription drug misuse.

Appointees to a Special Commission to Study the Incorporation of Safe and Effective Pain Treatment and Prescribing Practices into the Professional Training of Students

that may Prescribe Controlled Substances (6)

Todd Brown, MHP, R.Ph.:

Dr. Todd Brown is currently the Vice Chairman of the Department of Pharmacy Practice and of the School of Pharmacy at the Northeastern University Bouve College of Health Sciences. Dr. Brown, a graduate of Northeastern's Bouve College of Health Sciences, has over thirty years of pharmaceutical experience. Mr. Brown also currently serves as the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Independent Pharmacists Association and has spent time at all levels of the pharmaceutical field in the past.

Marybeth Cooper, Ph.D, DM:

Dr. Cooper currently serves as the 13th President of Springfield College, where she has developed community focused programs, including 'the Learning Commons' and 'Study Circle.' These initiatives have encouraged community involvement and helped to develop ground-breaking learning methods that allow the engagement of diverse segments of the school's population. Dr. Cooper previously served as Vice President for Student Affairs at the college. She received her B.A. at University of Delaware, and went on to earn her Doctorate of Philosophy in Education Administration and a Doctorate of Management from Case Western Reserve University.

Nitigna Desai, MD:

Dr. Nitigna Desai has over two decades of experience researching substance abuse. A Harvard Medical School graduate, Dr. Desai currently serves as Director of Addiction Psychiatry at Bedford Veteran Affairs Medical Center and Director of Substance Abuse Service Line within the Psychiatry Department at New England Healthcare. Additionally, she works as an instructor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and an assistant professor of Psychiatry at Boston University Medical School (BUMC) and the University of Massachusetts Medical School. She is also the fellowship site director for Addiction Psychiatry fellowship for BUMC and UMASS Medical School.

Myechia Minter-Jordan, MD, MBA:

A trained physician, Myechia Minter-Jordan currently serves as the President and CEO of the Dimock Community Health Center, a nonprofit health and social service agency, which, among other things, works to enhance the viability and accessibility of health care to the community which it serves. As an instructor at Harvard Medical School and a faculty advisor for the Agents of Change Program there, Myechia understands the integral part that education plays in the minds of our young people. Dr. Minter-Jordan graduated from Brown Medical School and earned an M.B.A from Johns Hopkins University.

Brad Ulrich:

Brad Ulrich has been working in the pharmaceutical industry for almost 20 years. A graduate of Purdue University, Mr. Ulrich has worked on Boston Mayor Marty Walsh's 'New Bostonians' Advisory Council, and currently serves as Regional Vice-President for The Walgreen's Company.

Joan Vitello-Cicciu, Ph.D., RN:

Dr. Joan Vitello-Cicciu joins the Governor's Commission with significant clinical and administrative experience, holding degrees in both Nursing and Human & Organizational Systems. She currently serves as the Dean of the University of Massachusetts Graduate School of Nursing in Worcester. Dr. Vitello-Cicciu has worked in hospitals and organizations around the Commonwealth in both clinical and administrative roles throughout her career where she has proven herself proficient in the restructuring of clinical services, the recruitment and retention of qualified healthcare providers, and the management of patient care service costs across both the public and private healthcare sector.

**Appointees to a Special Commission to Examine the Feasibility
of Establishing a Pain Management Access Program (6)****Dr. Thomas Lynch Jr. , MD:**

Dr. Thomas Lynch is currently the CEO and chairman of the Massachusetts General Physicians Organization, and previously served as the Director of the Yale Cancer Center and Physician-in-Chief. Prior to his time at Yale, he served as chief of Hematology-Oncology at the Massachusetts General Hospital's Cancer Center and director of the Center for Thoracic Cancers. Dr. Lynch graduated from Yale University and Yale Medical School.

Dr. Paul Mendis, MD:

Dr. Paul Mendis currently serves as the Chief Medical Officer of Neighborhood Health Plan. He brings over thirty years of healthcare executive experience to the Governor's Opioid Commission, having previously served in leadership roles at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Harvard Community Health Plan and the Dimock Community Health Center. A graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Medical School, he specializes in Medicaid, Medicare, and commercial managed care. Dr. Mendis operates on the Board of Directors for the Massachusetts Medicaid Policy Institute, the Massachusetts Association of Health Plans, the Community Medical Alliance, and the Dimock Community Health Center.

Rosa Rodriguez-Monguio, Ph.D.:

Rosa Rodriguez has spent the past twenty years in higher education and has taught in both the United States and her home country of Spain. She is currently an Associate Professor and the Program Head of Health Policy and Management at UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences. Previously, she worked as an Assistant Professor at Universidad Europea and Ohio State University. She earned her B.S. in Economics from University Carlos III in Madrid, Spain and went on to get her Doctorate in Health Economics from University of Barcelona, graduating Summa Cum Laude. In 2016 she earned her Masters in Clinical Research from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Julian Robinson, MD:

Dr. Julian Robinson has significant health care experience in OB/GYN care, clinical research, and management services. Dr. Robinson currently works as Chief of Obstetrics at Brigham & Women's Hospital, and serves as an Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Robinson is a graduate of the University of London and has been recognized for his

outstanding work in clinical excellence by Top Doctors In Boston, Boston Magazine, and Castle Connolly.

Scott Sigman, MD:

Dr. Sigman is an orthopedic surgeon, specializing in sports medicine, and was the former Chief of Orthopedics at Lowell General Hospital. He is graduate of Tufts University, the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Dr. Sigman has worked with UMass Lowell Athletics, the Boston Cannons, the Lowell Lock Monsters, and the US Olympic/World Cup Ski Team in the past and is a member of Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society.

Alysa Veidis, RN, MSN, FNP:

Alysa Veidis is currently serving as Case Management Coordinator at the Boston Medical Center (BMC). Veidis has worked to develop an Integrated Behavioral Healthcare model at BMC that enables better connections between PCPs and healthcare providers. Veidis also serves as Nursing Program Director for the Lesotho-Boston Health Alliance, a partnership between BMC and the Government of Lesotho, dedicated to the development of medical and healthcare infrastructure in the African nation. She is a graduate of Boston College's Connell School of Nursing and Northeastern's Family Nurse Practitioner Master's Program.

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